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ABSTRACT

This discussion paper focuses attention on the interrelationship between two issues--the unsatisfactory performance of New Zealand's economic system and slow changes in its education system--by examining the role of education and training in economic performance and development. It analyzes the views of a representative group of leaders across a wide spectrum of economic and social sectors. Its purpose is to provide pointers for policy and decision makers in New Zealand. A section on essential requirements points up inadequacies of the training scene and compares New Zealand training needs to those of western industrialized countries. Nine figures provide data on respondents and on respondents' attitudes regarding New Zealand's economic and educational success, educational aims, student attitudes, and opportunities for continued learning. This is followed by responses to questions regarding economic success. Other parts of this paper focus on respondents' views on educational costs and investments, the aims and achievements of the education and training system, youth entering the work force, community involvement and investment in education, and the importance of continuing education in New Zealand. Finally, the paper lists respondents' concerns that need to be addressed at a national level and recommends what can be done. A list of the aims of education in New Zealand is appended. (YLB)

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# EDUCATION AND THE ECONOMY

# A VOCATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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A VOCATIONAL TRAINING COUNCIL DISCUSSION PAPER

BASED ON A SURVEY CONDUCTED BETWEEN JULY AND NOVEMBER 1985

**PREPARED BY:**

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CE051675

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The Vocational Training Council (VTC) was established by Act of Parliament in 1968 to make recommendations on training to the Government and industry, to undertake research and to promote systematic training throughout New Zealand.

- The Council is an independent body which reports to the Government.
- Its membership includes Employers, Unions, Government Departments, the education sector and special interest groups.
- Its Advisory Committees produce guidelines on a wide range of training matters including:
  - apprenticeship
  - information technology
  - Maori and Pacific Island people in the workforce
  - women in the workforce
- The VTC employs a full time secretariat whose staff include advisors, consultants, training analysts and researchers.

Vocational Training Council
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Wellington
New Zealand

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# INTRODUCTION

New Zealand has slipped from third in 1950 to eighteenth in 1984 in the economic index of nations maintained by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). In recent years there has been criticism that the economic system has not been performing satisfactorily. There has also been criticism that the education system has not been changing quickly enough.

This Discussion Paper focuses attention on the inter-relationship between these two issues by examining the role of education and training in economic performance and development. It is an analysis of the views of a representative group of leaders across a wide spectrum of economic and social sectors whose opinions are influential in many spheres. Its purpose is to provide pointers for those who make policy or who have to take decisions in New Zealand. Although reference is made to developments in other countries it is not intended to be a detailed comparative study. It should be noted, however, that our ability to compete effectively in trade is a significant factor for economic success.

Respondents to the survey were chosen because they were prominent and influential decision makers at local or national level. Their responsibilities covered a wide range of different spheres of activity. They included: leaders of national employer and employee organisations and economic sector groups; chief executives and board chairpersons of major New Zealand companies and managing directors of small companies employing a significant proportion of their local workforce; local authority leaders and senior officials in government departments; policy makers and administrators in the education sector; people of influence in the media; and leaders in the field of voluntary social welfare activity. Care was also taken to ensure a geographic balance between the North and South Islands, rural and urban localities, and provincial and major cities. Sex, age and ethnic origin were also determining factors in selecting respondents. Most of those interviewed were influential in several economic sectors and over one quarter of them came from New Zealand's largest companies. *(See Figures 1 and 2)*

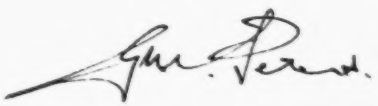
THE UNMISTAKABLE CONCLUSION THAT MUST BE DRAWN IS THEIR OVERWHELMING RECOGNITION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE. THIS IS IN KEEPING WITH A RECENT MAJOR OVERSEAS STUDY OF WEST GERMANY, THE UNITED STATES AND JAPAN IN WHICH . . ." EVERY SINGLE BODY OF OPINION BELIEVED THAT THEIR ECONOMIC SUCCESS WOULD HAVE BEEN IMPOSSIBLE WITHOUT A STRONGLY SUSTAINED EFFORT IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING". THE CHALLENGE THAT FACES NEW ZEALAND IS TO RECOGNISE THIS IN ITS FUTURE POLICIES AND SO RECAPTURE THE GROUND THAT HAS BEEN LOST IN THE LAST THIRTY YEARS.

The project originated from a meeting of OECD Ministers of Education in November 1984 at which they called for the Organisation to give attention in its future work to the "interaction between education and training and structural change in the economy . . . thereby promoting quality and flexibility in the labour market". It has been undertaken in New Zealand by the Vocational Training Council at the invitation of the Minister of Employment, the Hon. Kerry Burke, and the results have already been forwarded to the OECD in Paris.

The Council's Director, Derek Wood, has been involved in the development of the project, first as a member of an international group of vocational training advisers to the OECD and later as the country correspondent for New Zealand. He has been strongly supported throughout by two of the Council's Senior Advisory Officers, Jill Tetley and Bryan Whisker, who have been responsible for the interviews and the research. Although

circumstances beyond its control restricted the participation of the New Zealand Planning Council to the early stages of the project, its help and advice in establishing sound guidelines for its development and its financial contribution are acknowledged and appreciated. So too is the expert advice of Dr John Watson, the former Director of the New Zealand Council for Educational Research.

While continuing to preserve the anonymity of the respondents the Council would like to thank them most sincerely for their time and considered responses and to acknowledge that, without them, this publication would not have been possible. Members of the Council were not themselves interviewed and may not necessarily endorse the views of the respondents. This Discussion Paper will no doubt provoke debate but that is what is intended. In so doing the Council trusts that it will make a positive contribution to the development of future policy in this field which will help to make New Zealand economically competitive in the future.



G M Peters
Chairman

August 1986

# FOREWORD

This Discussion Paper is the final stage of a three part project based on in-depth interviews with a representative group of prominent decision makers in New Zealand.

A Research Report, developed from these interviews, provided a comprehensive record of opinions across a wide spectrum of economic and social sectors. From this a Synopsis Report was prepared which analysed the replies of the respondents.

This Discussion Paper draws heavily on those documents and highlights, for the general reader, the issues to be addressed in determining future directions for education and training in New Zealand in relation to economic restructuring and growth. Although used sparingly, quotations are representative of statements made by many of the respondents. Recent information and statistics from other New Zealand sources which are relevant to this enquiry are also included.

Respondents were asked three types of questions. In some cases their opinions were invited; in others they were asked to rank criteria or options in order of priority; and in others to record their answers on a scale. In this latter case responses are shown diagramatically in the text. On these diagrams two-thirds of the responses lie within the boxes shown, and the heavy vertical line indicates the average or mean response.

THROUGHOUT ALL STAGES OF THE PROJECT THE TERM 'EDUCATION' HAS BEEN WIDELY INTERPRETED TO INCLUDE BOTH GENERAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND RESPONDENTS WERE REMINDED OF THIS WIDER DEFINITION. SUCH A DEFINITION CONFORMS WITH THE STATED BELIEF OF THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING COUNCIL THAT THE ROLE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IS TO HELP DEVELOP THE CAPACITIES AND POTENTIAL OF INDIVIDUALS AS MEMBERS OF THE WORKFORCE AND TO ASSIST ENTERPRISES TO IMPROVE THEIR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL EFFECTIVENESS.

Many of the overseas statistics used in this book originate from a significant report, *Competence and Competition*, published in the United Kingdom in 1984, which drew attention to the unsatisfactory position of that country in relation to its main trading competitors. In acknowledging this material the authors also pay tribute to Christopher Hayes and his project team for the inspiration provided by their work. To illustrate the position in New Zealand, statistics drawn from official sources are also included. However, because of differing educational structures, direct comparisons with other countries may not always be appropriate.

The aims of education as presented in the Department of Education's Core Curriculum Review in March 1984 were an important point of reference for the participants in this survey. They are included in this publication for the benefit of readers.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to a large number of people who gave us such willing assistance. The attitudinal survey was developed around seven categories of beliefs established by the OECD and was drawn up in consultation with the Planning Council and the Research Division of the Department of Education. In particular, we wish to record our appreciation to the following people:

| | |
|---|---|
| Mr I Douglas | (Chairman, New Zealand Planning Council) |
| Mr D Fergusson | (Department of Education) |
| Dr C Boswell and Dr D Atmore | (Computer Centre, Victoria University of Wellington) |
| Mr I Livingstone | (Director, New Zealand Council for Educational Research) |
| Mr R Bubendorfer | (Principal, Wellington Polytechnic) |
| Mr J Hercus | (Director, Christchurch Polytechnic) |
| Mr D McAven | (Manager, Computer Resource Centre, Christchurch Polytechnic) |
| Ms J Palmer | (Artist) |
| Ms J Batty and Mrs J Kirkland | (Transcript Typists) |

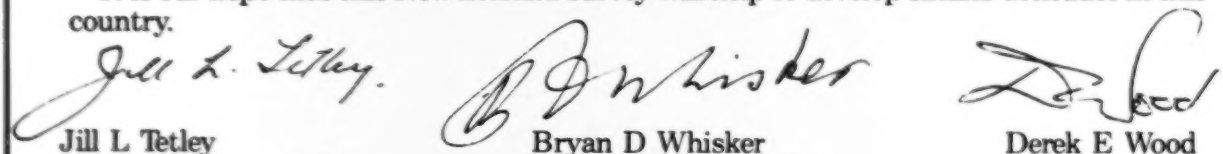
and the following staff of the Vocational Training Council

| | |
|---|---|
| Mr P Nolan | (Assistant Director, Training and Development) |
| Mrs J Alekna | (Senior Typist) |
| Mrs A Melling | (Advisory Officer — Information Services) |
| Mrs J. Fergusson | (Librarian) |
| Miss K Wilson | (Receptionist) |

In summarising attitudes as a result of his studies in the Federal Republic of Germany, the United States and Japan, Christopher Hayes noted that:

> *'One notion is shared by all three countries: education and work competence, however differently conceived, are a key to their success and they are setting about it with the will which has earned them their present position'*

It is our hope that this New Zealand survey will help to develop similar attitudes in this country.



Jill L Tetley
Senior Advisory Officer

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Senior Advisory Officer

Derek E Wood
Director

Vocational Training Council

August 1986

# SETTING THE SCENE

*'Education should find out exactly what it is that each individual wants to do. Finding this out and assisting and helping the student towards those goals, means change and flexibility. It means opening up options. It also means that there should first be a relationship between the education system and the economy.'*

— Respondent from the Agricultural Sector —

There was widespread agreement amongst respondents that a trained and experienced workforce is the life-blood of New Zealand's economy. To provide such a workforce, a clear link is needed between the economic system on the one hand, and education and training on the other. There are benefits to the economy through the entry of trained young people into the workforce, since this process is the most important single way by which the labour force is renewed and developed.

## IS THIS HAPPENING IN NEW ZEALAND?

In 1984 the British Manpower Services Commission undertook an investigation into the role of education and training in economic development in the United Kingdom which showed that, in comparison with its trading competitors, the country was lagging behind. These results influenced policy makers in the United Kingdom.

In March 1985 the OECD invited its member states to take part in a similar international study of the relationship between education and the economy. In New Zealand the Government requested the Vocational Training Council to undertake this task.

THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY SHOW WIDESPREAD SUPPORT AMONGST DECISION MAKERS IN NEW ZEALAND FOR THE BELIEF, SUPPORTED BY OVERSEAS RESEARCH, THAT ECONOMIC SUCCESS IS UNLIKELY WITHOUT A STRONGLY SUSTAINED EFFORT IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING.

## WHAT IMPLICATIONS DOES THIS HAVE FOR NEW ZEALAND?

This is not the first New Zealand report on the relationships between education and training and economic development, but the Vocational Training Council believes that THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT A CONCURRENT SURVEY OF LEADERS ACROSS THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SPECTRUMS HAS BEEN UNDERTAKEN. These people have an important influence on New Zealand's social and economic direction and this study is based on interviews with one hundred and twenty six of them.

An analysis of the results indicates a surprising level of agreement about the major issues and problems and the remedies needed.

THE SURVEY DID NOT ATTEMPT TO MEASURE THE FACTUAL ACCURACY OF THE RESPONDENTS' STATEMENTS IN 1985. RATHER, THE VIEWS OR PERCEPTIONS OF THE RESPONDENTS WERE OBTAINED ON THE BASIS THAT IF THEY BELIEVED A STATEMENT TO BE TRUE, THEY WOULD MAKE OTHER DECISIONS BASED ON THAT BELIEF.

# ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS

*'I think some long term strategies have to be developed. We have some classic difficulties. An excess in one decade of one profession or trade and a shortage the following decade, indicates a lack of planning.'*

— Respondent from the Trade Union Sector —

RESPONDENTS TO THE SURVEY HIGHLIGHTED THE INADEQUACIES OF THE CURRENT NEW ZEALAND TRAINING SCENE:

TECHNICIAN TRAINING WAS SEEN AS UNSTRUCTURED AND REQUIRING MORE ON-THE-JOB TRAINING FOR STUDENTS.

THE CURRENT APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM ACROSS ALL TRADES WAS SEEN AS RIGID, OUTDATED AND SEX DISCRIMINATORY. RESPONDENTS CALLED FOR MORE INVESTIGATION INTO THE BENEFITS OF PRE-APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING.

## WHAT IS BEING DONE?

Since the passage of the revised Apprenticeship Act in 1982, Governments have been actively promoting apprenticeship reform through generous incentives in the training area. The flow on effect is yet to be realised.

But the problem to be overcome is considerable. Although the number of apprenticeship contracts in force in the private sector has fluctuated, the numbers now are no greater than they were in 1970.

In September 1985 the Vocational Training Council and the Government jointly sponsored a tripartite mission to Australia to gain a first hand appreciation of the Australian experience in pre-employment training. Its unanimous conclusion was that the possibilities offered by systematic post-school training schemes should be actively investigated by employers, unions and the Government. As yet no new initiatives of the type envisaged by the mission have been developed.

In spite of special incentives to encourage employers to take on female apprentices, results to date have been disappointing.

Engineering is a useful barometer in assessing the potential for economic progress as it is the essential requirement for the introduction of a manufacturing base and a springboard to new technology. In his United Kingdom study, *Competence for Competition*, Christopher Hayes used the training of professional engineers as a basis for international comparison. This was done on the grounds that AN ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS IS CONSIDERED ESSENTIAL FOR ECONOMIC PROGRESS.

However, without an adequate supply of technician engineers, in a ratio of at least 2:1, professional engineers are unable to perform to capacity and find themselves doing technicians jobs for which they are not adequately trained.

Finally, it is also essential to have a well qualified and trained workforce at the trades level if the engineering industry is to fulfill its key role in economic development.

It may not be appropriate to make direct comparisons between New Zealand and such highly industrialised countries as the United Kingdom, West Germany, Japan and the United States, where the proportional dependence on manufacturing is so much greater. Nonetheless, it is useful to compare positions in general terms. The last twenty to thirty years have seen a rapid expansion of our manufacturing base, and this has meant that New Zealand has become more dependent on engineering skills.

**THE ENGINEERING INDUSTRY NOW EMPLOYS 27.4% OF THE TOTAL NUMBER EMPLOYED IN MANUFACTURING ENTERPRISES IN THIS COUNTRY (1984 figures).**

| Graduate Engineers Entering the Workforce (Per Million of Population) | |
|---|---|
| Japan (1982) | 553 |
| United States (1982) | 350 |
| United Kingdom (1982) | 270 |
| Germany (1981) | 110 |
| New Zealand (1982) | 120 |

On the basis of the figures quoted above we would seem to be doing better than West Germany. However, New Zealand, in 1985, was still producing 120 professional engineers per million of the population and had not increased technician and trade intakes. The Germans, on the other hand, had realised the economic necessity of training more engineers. In 1981 they almost doubled their intake in all facets of engineering and increased it again in 1982.

The shortage of engineers in New Zealand is not a new phenomenon. In 1948 the situation was so bad that a special report on the education, training and supply of professional engineers was called for by the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Peter Fraser. This showed that a 60% increase in the output of professional engineers was needed over the following five years. Thirty years later the Engineering Industry Training Board sounded warning bells concerning the shortage of professional and technician engineers. The energy projects created an even greater demand. To solve this problem immigration was stepped up, particularly for large Government projects.

The problem remains. The Engineering Industry Training Board in its latest (1985) publication warns of an imminent shortage of technician engineers. The demand from industry is increasing at a time when the number training is decreasing. Numbers qualifying with NZCE (Mechanical) fell from 151 in 1981 to 96 in 1982 and have remained at about this level in succeeding years. At the same time the student dropout rate has increased sharply from 64% in 1981 to 84% in 1984.

*'This situation, if allowed to continue, will result in shortages of Technician Engineers, which will restrict the development of technical and high technology companies, and also limit potential in New Zealand's manufacturing industry.'*

Nor have engineering apprenticeship numbers grown significantly during this period. From 3,131 contracts in force in the private sector in 1978 they peaked at 3,718 in 1982 but have fallen since to 3,232 in 1985.

**EMIGRATION HAS ALSO AFFECTED THE SUPPLY OF ENGINEERS.**

Since 1976 some 12,132 New Zealand trained people in engineering occupations have migrated from this country.

IN THE YEAR TO MARCH 1985 783 NEW ZEALAND ENGINEERS LEFT THE COUNTRY.

THESE NUMBERS REPRESENT A SIGNIFICANT PROPORTION OF THE TOTAL SKILLED ENGINEERING WORKFORCE AND NULLIFY ANY INCREASE IN NUMBERS OF NEW ENGINEERING APPRENTICESHIP CONTRACTS.

IN THE NEW TECHNOLOGY FIELD where the western industrialised countries have had no historical advantage, New Zealand has also not performed well. Although the first computers were imported into this country in the late 1950's the shortage of skilled staff in this field is worse than in engineering.

A national survey of data processing training needs undertaken by the Vocational Training Council in 1983 revealed that, in this rapidly growing industry, there was already a shortage of 2,500 people. A 1985 commercial survey put the figure at 3,700. The extreme mobility of trained staff, both within New Zealand, and to overseas positions, is a constant drain. Although the Vocational Training Council has established an industry based committee to come to grips with this and other problems in the wider field of information technology, the issue of funding training in this sector is of major concern.

*Figure 1*

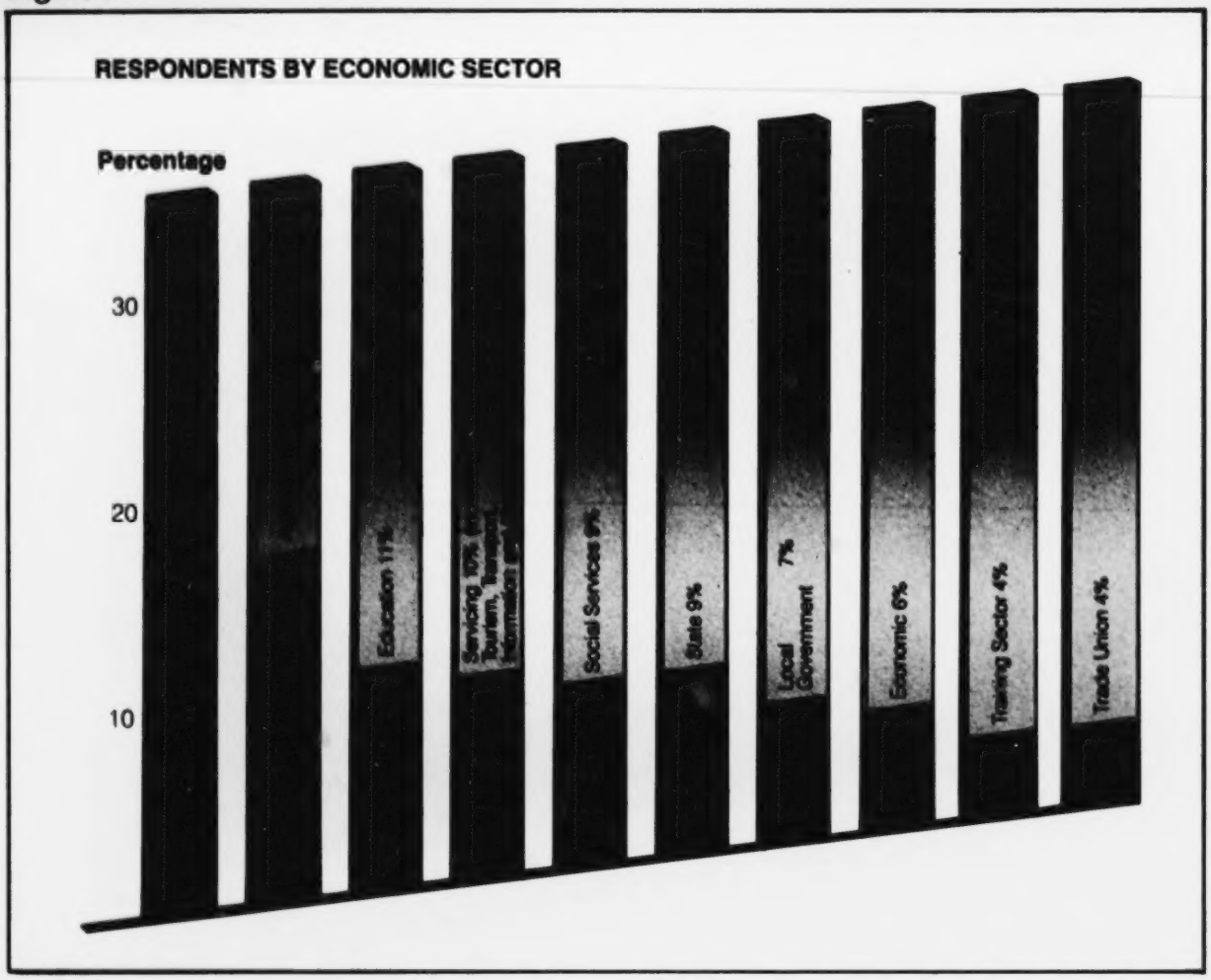



*Figure 2*

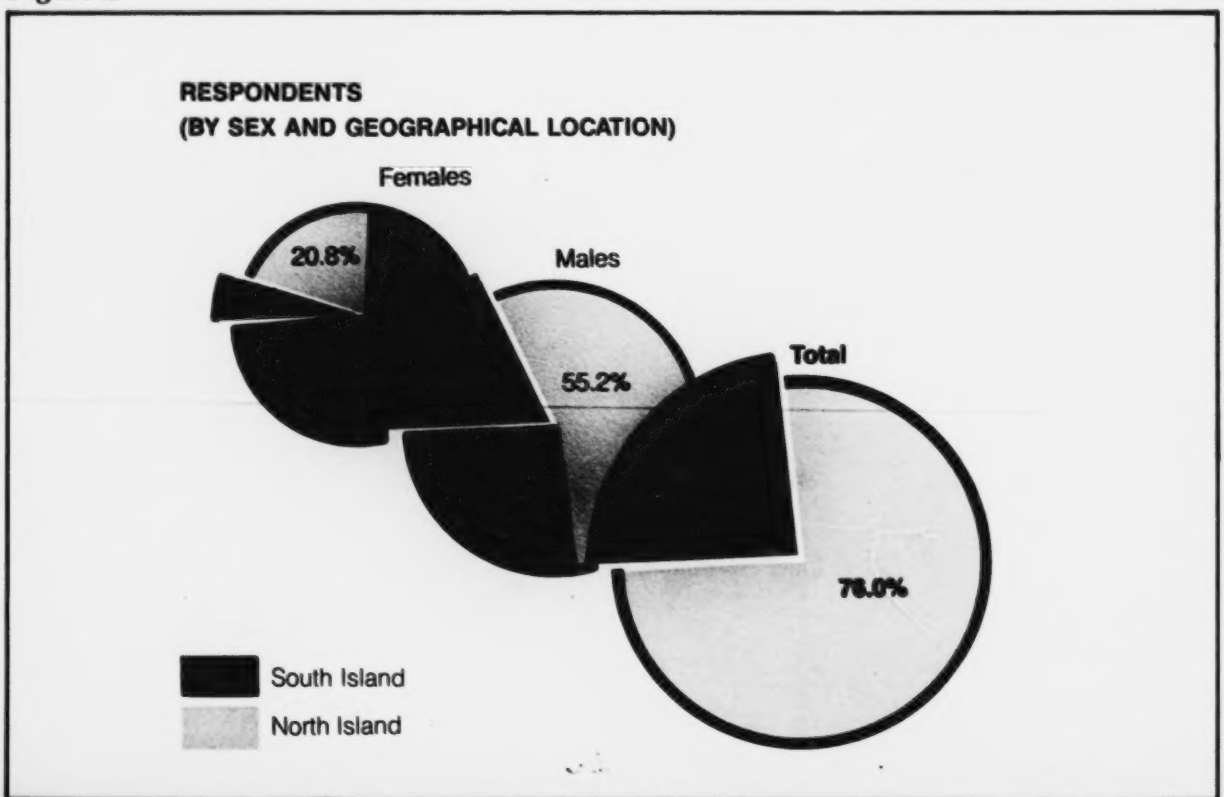


*Figure 3*

3 Do you regard New Zealand as being economically successful?
If so, why? If not, why not?

Where would you place New Zealand's economic success on the following scale:

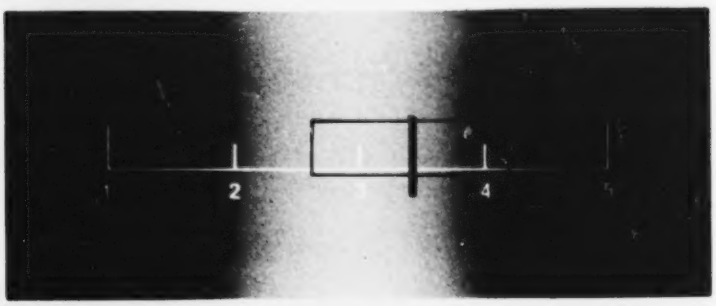



*Figure 5*

5 What is your view on whether education in this country supports economic performance?
If so, how? If not, why not?

Where would you place educational support for economic performance in New Zealand on the following scale:

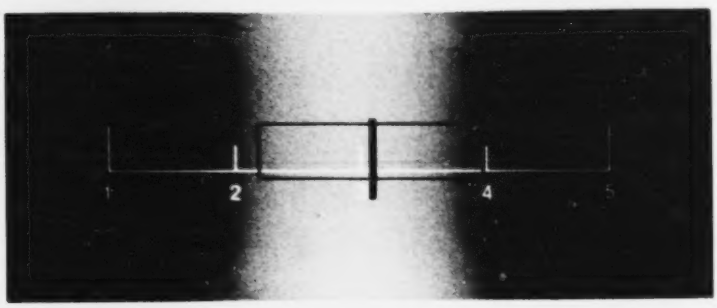



*Figure 6*

8 What is your view about the following list of educational aims?

Please place your opinion of these aims on the following scale:

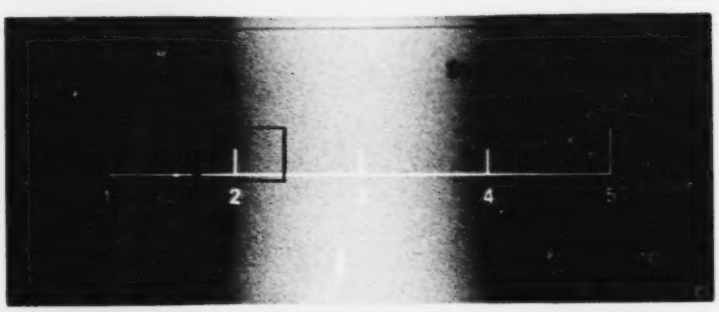


*Figure 4*

**KEY**

1. **No formal Vocational Education & Training**
2. **Professional level training**
3. **Middle Group level training**
4. **Trades level training**

**NOTE:** In New Zealand 36% of Group 1 eventually attend a technical institute. However, this figure has not been included as it does not represent formal vocational education in preparation for working life.

*Figure 7*

9 Do you see any of these educational aims contributing to performance in the labour market?

Where would you place the contribution of these educational aims to the labour market on the following scale:

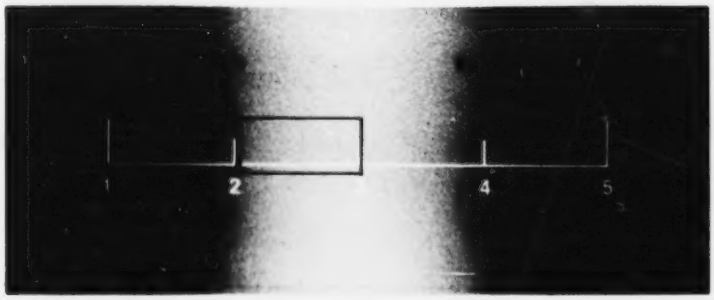



*Figure 8*

13 What are your observations on the attitudes of young people entering the workforce:
(a) In general
(b) From direct personal experience

Where would you place the attitudes of young people entering the workforce on the following scale:

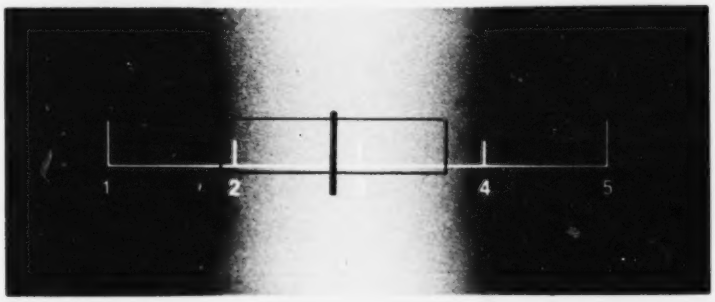
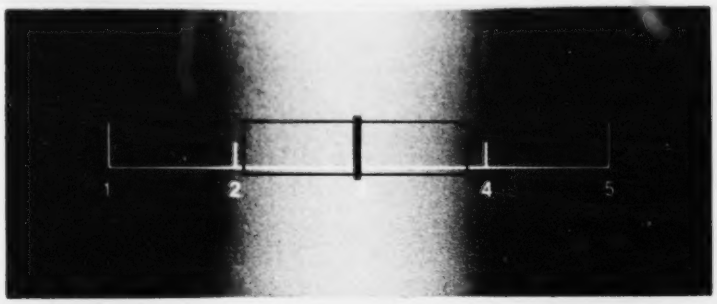



*Figure 9*

17 What opportunities for continued learning not presently available, should be made available?

Where would you place present opportunities for continued learning in New Zealand on the following scale:



# ECONOMIC SUCCESS?

*'Economic success is achieved first, when you have a low rate of unemployment; second, when you have a rising standard of living; when there are equal opportunities and a reasonable spread of economic activity.'*

— Respondent from the Central Government/Corporate Sector —

This survey took place while the New Zealand economy was in the process of being restructured. The end goal of this restructuring is a much more market oriented economy, which reflects and responds to overseas price signals so that New Zealand economic activities will be valued at their international worth.

To set the scene for the survey, respondents were asked for their definition of an economically successful country. Few questioned the present Government's economic approach, but few saw a successful country in purely economic terms.

90% OF RESPONDENTS SAW SOCIAL CRITERIA AND ATTITUDES AS EQUALLY IMPORTANT IN THEIR DEFINITION OF ECONOMIC SUCCESS.

They saw the individual's right to housing, employment and education and the need for racial harmony as being important for an economically successful country. To ignore these would be economically counter productive.

## IS NEW ZEALAND ECONOMICALLY SUCCESSFUL?

89% OF RESPONDENTS SAID 'NO'.

(52% gave a direct 'No' and 37% a qualified 'No'). *(See Figure 3)*

The majority of respondents answered this question by reflecting on New Zealand's past. A TYPICAL REPLY WAS THAT NEW ZEALAND HAD BEEN ECONOMICALLY SUCCESSFUL IN THE 1950's AND 1960's BUT WAS NO LONGER SUCCESSFUL.

Reasons given for the current lack of economic success included:

- Poor economic management by successive Governments
- The failure to adapt quickly to overseas trading crises
- Insufficient expenditure on education and training
- Lack of skills in the workforce which should have been anticipated
- Slowness to enter the new technology fields

MOST RESPONDENTS EQUATED THE CURRENT LACK OF ECONOMIC SUCCESS WITH CUTBACKS IN EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING.

While they acknowledged that a stable society and sufficient capital for investment were important for economic success, most respondents stressed the need for A WELL EDUCATED AND TRAINED WORKFORCE.

# EDUCATION — COST OR INVESTMENT?

*'You need to have an appropriately educated workforce. It is clear at the moment that New Zealand has not recognised the link between education and the workforce and we have provided in adequate funding in both education and training. That kind of investment has to be provided if you are going to improve. It is really fundamental to economic growth'*

— Respondent from the Social Services Sector —

**EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION**

| YearEnded 31 March | Net Expenditure ($M) | Proportion of GDP | Percentage of Net Government Expenditure |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1973 | 376.8 | 5.0 | 16.6 |
| 1979 | 929.3 | 5.3 | 13.6 |
| 1984 | 1674.3 | 4.9 | 11.8 |
| 1985 | 1728.6 | 4.5* | 11.3 |
| 1986 | 2010.3 | 4.4+ | 11.4 |

* Provisional
\+ Estimated

MANY RESPONDENTS BELIEVED THAT THERE SHOULD BE EXTRA STATE EXPENDITURE IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING.

Most New Zealanders are justifiably proud of their education system. For over a century education in New Zealand has been free, secular and compulsory. A recent OECD examination has shown that it is a low cost and efficient system.

HOWEVER, IN THE VIEW OF THE RESPONDENTS, THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IS NOT NOW ADEQUATELY EQUIPPING YOUNG PEOPLE FOR WORKING LIFE OR FOR LIVING.

The depth of expression of concern by respondents is an indication that something is still wrong. Respondents frequently cited the difficulties felt and experienced by the young in the transition from school to working life. They considered that parts of the education and training system were academic and archaic. They believed that provisions for continuing education were erratic.

Percentage of School Leavers Entering the Labour Market Without A Recognised Educational Qualification (1981)

| | |
|---|---|
| Germany | 10 |
| Japan | 13 |
| England and Wales | 16 |
| United States | 29 |
| New Zealand (1984) | 33 |

Percentage of Population 16-24 Participating in Education (1981)

| | |
|---|---|
| United States | 73 |
| Japan (1982) | 54 |
| Germany | 45 |
| United Kingdom | 32 |
| New Zealand (1984) | 27 |

Australian educationalists are alarmed that only 31.7% of Australian 17 year olds are still attending school compared with 88.1% in Japan. THE NEW ZEALAND FIGURE OF 33.5% SHOULD CAUSE US GREAT CONCERN.

Even if students at technical institutes, universities, and teachers' colleges are included, the percentage of New Zealand 17 year olds in formal education only rises to 46.2%.

33% OF NEW ZEALAND SCHOOL LEAVERS ENTER THE LABOUR FORCE WITHOUT A RECOGNISED FORMAL QUALIFICATION.

65% OF NEW ZEALAND YOUNG PEOPLE ENTER THE WORKFORCE DIRECTLY FROM A SCHOOL WITHOUT ANY FORMAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION OR TRAINING *(See Figure 4)*

LESS THAN HALF OF OUR 17 YEAR OLDS ARE IN FULL TIME EDUCATION OR TRAINING.

## DOES THIS CONSTITUTE A CRISIS?

These figures help to explain why 80% OF THE RESPONDENTS DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE CURRENT EDUCATION SYSTEM IN NEW ZEALAND SUPPORTS ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE (25% gave a direct 'No' and 55% a qualified 'No'). *(See Figure 5)*

The secondary school level came in for heaviest criticism. Highlighted were:

- Apathetic attitudes and poor motivation of students
- Lack of life skills
- Lack of curriculum relevance
- Lack of flexibility within the system

IS THIS CRITICISM OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL SYSTEM JUSTIFIED?

# THE AIMS AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM

*'The first aim of any education system is to realise the worth of the individual. If it does that in a proper way everything else follows'*

— Respondent from the Media Sector —

The aims of any education system needs to be in harmony with the goals of society. This includes current economic, social and cultural objectives.

## IS THIS HAPPENING IN THE PRESENT EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM?

Respondents believed that the most important aims in the education system should be:

- To develop a feeling of self worth and a belief in the individual's contribution to economic performance
- To develop a broad educational base on which more advanced studies can be built
- To produce a flexible workforce
- To promote a desire to continue learning throughout working life

ONLY 39% OF RESPONDENTS BELIEVED THAT NEW ZEALAND EDUCATION SYSTEM DID THIS.

Common criticisms included:

- Lack of basic numeracy and communication skills
- Inadequate provision for vocational education and transition school-to-work skills
- A failure to engender a feeling of self worth in students
- The fear of failure caused by the system
- The lack of acknowledgement of cultural differences
- Insufficient co-operation between industry and education

## ARE THESE CRITICISMS VALID?

Respondents who praised the New Zealand education system highlighted the following factors:

- It provides good basic education
- It provides opportunities for those with abilities and skills to undertake training at any level within the system
- It allows flexibility in the university degree structure (in comparison with overseas universities)

## ARE THE DEVELOPMENTS IN OUR SCHOOLS ADEQUATELY PUBLICISED IN THE EMPLOYMENT SECTOR?

The aims of education in New Zealand, as presented in the Department of Education's Core Curriculum Review, March 1984, are shown on page 31. They were well received by respondents. *(See Figure 6)*

They also agreed that the achievement of these aims would contribute to labour market performance. *(See Figure 7)*

BUT MANY RESPONDENTS WERE CYNICAL ABOUT EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AIMS.

They expressed concern about the lack of emphasis on life and basic skills and the widespread lack of acknowledgement of cultural and sex differences. In other words, the aims as stated by the Department of Education in many instances paralleled the educational aims that respondents saw as important.

THEIR EXPERIENCE WITH SCHOOL LEAVERS DID NOT GIVE THEM CONFIDENCE THAT THESE AIMS WERE BEING SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENTED AT PRESENT.

WHY IS THERE SUCH A WIDE DIVERGENCE BETWEEN THE EDUCATIONAL AIMS AND THE PERCEPTIONS OF THE RESPONDENTS?

Respondents' attitudes to the desirable key achievements of education were very clear. The need for a more flexible workforce with adaptable and transferable skills was seen as top priority. It was felt that the education system must prepare young people for a world of work in which the future developments cannot be measured with precision.

LEARNING AND TRAINING SHOULD PROCEED ON A BROAD-BASED APPROACH WHICH GIVES YOUNG PEOPLE:

- A feeling of self worth
- A confidence to exercise their future options
- The will to continue learning
- The capacity to adapt to change

Respondents saw a need for the system to provide:

- Early skill identification
- A stronger vocational education component in secondary schools
- A quicker response by the system to change
- Better long term planning
- A greater emphasis on pre-apprenticeship training
- Better co-ordination between education and industry
- The instilling of a sense of self-worth and self motivation in students
- More local autonomy and involvement in the system

# FROM SCHOOL TO WORK

*'My general impression is that the kids want jobs. The link between school and work is so well established that self esteem and work are connected. However, after a certain period of unemployment or after knocking on fifty doors without success, they start to go down hill and get dispirited and lie around demoralised'*

— Respondent from the Education Sector —

Respondents believe that it is vital for young people at the beginning of their working lives to be able to find work reasonably quickly. If this does not happen a 'victim' mentality will develop together with antisocial attitudes. *(See Figure 8)*

THE MAIN ISSUE STRESSED WAS THE DEMORALISING EFFECT OF UNEMPLOYMENT OR THE THREAT OF IT.

Respondents saw this threat of unemployment as producing:

- Loss of confidence
- Lack of choice
- Low motivation
- Disillusionment

33% OF RESPONDENTS SAW THE ATTITUDES OF YOUNG PEOPLE ENTERING THE WORKFORCE AS BI-MODAL — THOSE WHO WERE GOOD WERE EXTREMELY GOOD, AND THOSE WHO HAD A POOR ATTITUDE, WERE ALMOST UNEMPLOYABLE.

RESPONDENTS RECOGNISED SEVERAL PROBLEMS FACING THOSE ENTERING THE WORKFORCE FOR THE FIRST TIME.

Their perceptions were that:

- First jobs are often boring, monotonous and repetitive and producing a feeling of disillusionment
- There is a lack of choice in the job market because of high unemployment which produces the attitude that any job is better than none
- Young females do not seem to have the confidence or the support to undertake the range of occupations in which they would be very capable
- Provincial towns and rural areas do not offer a wide range of skills training and employment opportunities

Finally, the issue of CAREERS GUIDANCE AT SECONDARY SCHOOL was raised frequently. Respondents saw the need for:

- Up-to-date and accurate information
- Upgrading of the position of careers adviser

These views mirror advice given to the Minister of Education by the Vocational Training Council earlier this, year in which it recommended the need for:

- A senior staff member in all secondary schools to co-ordinate careers advice and careers education
- The careers adviser position to be a permanent position of responsibility in all secondary schools, to upgrade and strengthen this vital area

This second recommendation was first made in 1971 in an official Government report. Twenty pilot schools were the first to benefit from its implementation in 1973. Today, thirteen years later less than 25% of all schools have this new facility.

**WHY IS CHANGE SO SLOW?**

# COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION

*'I believe educational aims should be determined by input from central government, from employers and from the consumers of the system. I do believe that you need in framing your education and training systems, to have a broad base of input from the providers of the resources and the consumers of the product'*

— Respondent from the Financial Sector —

Most respondents believed that the system is too authoritarian, too uniform and fails to take into account the interests of the consumers. If education is divorced from the rest of the life of the community then one of its primary objectives — encouraging people to learn for life — will be undermined.

90% OF RESPONDENTS WANTED THE WIDEST POSSIBLE COMMUNITY CONSULTATION IN DETERMINING EDUCATIONAL AIMS.

This view is mirrored by the fact that over 20,000 submissions were received by the Department of Education on the recent Curriculum Review.

BY A RATIO OF 2:1 RESPONDENTS WANTED INDUSTRY INVOLVEMENT IN DEVELOPING CURRICULA AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL.

Respondents saw such involvement through professional or industry groups.

THE RATIO FAVOURING INDUSTRY INFLUENCE IN THE TERTIARY AREA INCREASED TO 3:1

This attitude quite clearly demonstrated that respondents saw a great need for better co-ordination between education and industry. Wide ranging industry sectors as diverse as medical, legal, engineering and servicing saw this as important.

60% OF RESPONDENTS SAW THE NEED FOR LESS CENTRALISED CONTROL OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM AND MORE LOCAL INVOLVEMENT IN CONTROL AND ADMINISTRATION.

HOW SHOULD THIS BE DONE?

# HOW IMPORTANT IS CONTINUING EDUCATION IN NEW ZEALAND?

*'I think the hardest thing is the availability of opportunity (for continuing education). It is not easy everywhere in New Zealand. The main centres have more available opportunities than other areas. Also you cannot afford to have people off work at peak times. I think we have a lot of good courses in most areas but they are not always available at the right time'*

— Respondent from the Agricultural Sector —

RESPONDENTS SAW THAT CONTINUING EDUCATION SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED BECAUSE:

- It improves job satisfaction
- It enhances the individual's job opportunities
- Performance depends on people being able to handle new systems and equipment

THESE FACTORS ARE OF BENEFIT TO BOTH THE EMPLOYER AND THE INDIVIDUAL.

90% OF RESPONDENTS ACKNOWLEDGED THE BENEFITS AND IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUING EDUCATION.

OVER 50% OF THE RESPONDENTS WERE NOT SATISFIED WITH THE PRESENT OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE OR CURRENT COMMUNITY ATTITUDES TOWARDS CONTINUING EDUCATION. *(See Figure 9)*

Workers with Recognised Qualification as a Proportion of the Total Population

| | % | Nature of Minimum Qualification |
|---|---|---|
| United States (1981) | 78% Civilian Labour Force | High School Diploma |
| Germany (1980) | 66% Labour Force | Vocational Qualification |
| Japan (1982) | 60% of Population 21+ | Lower Secondary School Diploma |
| United Kingdom (1981) | 50% of Working Population | One CSE Pass |
| New Zealand (1981 census) | 36% of Population 15+ | One or Two School Certificate Passes |

**Note:** What constitutes a recognised qualification differs from one country to another. No attempt is made here to put them on a comparable footing. If, however, such an attempt is made, it may be necessary to consider New Zealand qualifications gained in Form Six in which case the figure would drop from 36% to below 20%.

THIS TABLE SUGGESTS THAT IN NEW ZEALAND THE POPULATION IS GIVEN A ONE SHOT INNOCULATION AGAINST IGNORANCE WHICH IGNORES PRESENT DAY TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION AND THE CONSTANT NEED FOR NEW SKILLS.

HOW DO WE MODIFY THE TRADITIONAL NEW ZEALAND ATTITUDE THAT FORMAL EDUCATION STOPS ON LEAVING SCHOOL?

Respondents saw continuing education in New Zealand as spasmodic and patchy. They saw its quality and availability dependent on the participant's geographic location or employment position. They saw it as part-time study that is too brief, too accidental and too inefficient for training and retraining.

Frequently cited problems were:

- Inappropriate courses
- Insufficient on-the-job training
- Inadequate provision in provincial towns and rural areas
- Too few opportunities for retraining
- The lack of opportunity for continued learning by professional groups
- Funding difficulties
- Difficulties encountered by women re-entering the workforce

The 1980/1981 Social Indicators Survey (Department of Statistics) stated that the main users of continuing learning were those who had the greatest amount of formal education. Respondents also pointed this out.

DOES THIS MEAN THAT CONTINUING EDUCATION IN NEW ZEALAND IS ELITIST?

BY TRAINING ONLY THOSE WITH THE GREATEST AMOUNT OF FORMAL EDUCATION ARE WE FAILING TO REALISE THE FULL POTENTIAL OF THE WORKFORCE?

WHILE RECOGNISING THE STATE'S FINANCIAL COMMITMENT TO ALL EDUCATIONAL SECTORS, TWO OUT OF THREE OF THE RESPONDENTS BELIEVED THAT, IN THE FIELD OF CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING, THE EMPLOYER AND THE INDIVIDUAL SHOULD ALSO MAKE SOME FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION.

A lack of information and publicity remains one of the great weaknesses in continuing education. Current advertising of available courses is dull and unimaginative and makes little attempt to persuade or inform potential users, particularly those who are culturally or educationally disadvantaged.

RESPONDENTS SAW THAT INFORMATION ON CONTINUING EDUCATION SHOULD BE AVAILABLE:

- At the workplace
- In the home, via the electronic media
- In hotels, TABs, libraries
- In people oriented Government Departments (for example, Social Welfare, Labour)

and that a central clearing house for such information was needed.

# WHERE TO NOW?

The respondents to this survey have highlighted a number of concerns that need to be addressed at a national level for growth in the economy.

They can be summarised under the following headings:

- **The Need For A Skilled Workforce**
  Respondents believed that there is a need to make the best use of the total workforce, to develop skills and flexibility, to ensure prior planning for training and to provide resources for training and retraining.
- **The Need For Effective Forward Planning**
  Respondents criticised the shortage/surplus cycles of trained staff available for the workforce
- **The Need For Liaison and Co-ordination**
  Respondents believed that there is a need for better co-operation and co-ordination between education and training on the one hand, and industry and commerce on the other, especially at the secondary and tertiary levels and across all economic sectors
- **The Needs of Young People**
  Respondents believed that young people need to acquire personal and vocational skills which enable them to move easily from the education system into the workforce

## WHAT CAN BE DONE?

How long can we tolerate the high level of skill shortages along with massive unemployment, without doing more than we are doing at present?

**We Can Make Training More Accessible**

At present restrictions of qualification, location, age and numbers, limit entry to training programmes. We must recognise that training for one occupation for working life is no longer appropriate. Training systems must be made more flexible and accessible. Financial support should be used to encourage the development of training based on standards of competence rather than on the duration of the training programme.

**We Can Improve Training and Re-Training Opportunities for Those Already in the Workforce**

Given appropriate incentives we could reduce both unemployment and skill shortages by retraining sections of our existing workforce to a higher skill level. This would benefit the economy and also provide additional employment opportunities.

Areas where the workforce is contracting should be identified in sufficient time to allow retraining, thus avoiding redundancies leading to unemployment. The opportunities should be there for those who wish to retrain at any stage in their career, to do so easily.

**We Can Rationalise Our Qualifications**

People should be able to enter training programmes at different levels and to progress at different rates. They should be able to build on the qualifications they already have. They should not need to repeat courses in order to satisfy regulations governing additional qualifications.

**We can Place More Emphasis on Vocational Education and Training**

By raising the school leaving age, making pre-employment training virtually compulsory, or by denying welfare benefits to young people, many countries have combined a delayed entry to the workforce with an improved education and training programme. How long can we continue to allow 65% of our young people to enter the workforce directly from school without undertaking any formal vocational education and training?

**We Can Introduce Pre-Employment Training**
Despite the unanimous agreement of the 1985 tripartite mission to Australia, organised by the Vocational Training Council, no such scheme has yet been developed to increase training opportunities for school leavers. Industries such as tourism and information technology are amongst those that could provide employment opportunities and career prospects from such a scheme.

**We Can Build on the Proposed and Existing Schemes**
The current Government proposals and existing schemes (ACCESS and FAIR) have received wide support. Criticism has centred on the aspect of training without job prospects at the end. Needs and training must be co-ordinated.

**We Can Reconsider the Cost and Priorites**
There are many inequities in the existing system. Many overseas countries have found it necessary to make legislative changes to secure better training provisions. Some have shared the funding costs through special tax provisions or incentives. Others have passed laws to give all employees a right to leave for further education or training. Still others have raised the school leaving age and increased family support systems to compensate. Should we be considering such options?

**We Can Improve the Dissemination of Information**
New Zealand has the opportunity to introduce a comprehensive network of education and training opportunities into every home through the electronic media. This is being done successfully overseas.

THESE ARE THE CHALLENGES THAT FACE US

**1986 IS THE YEAR OF CHANGE IN TRAINING**

WHAT IS YOUR RESPONSE?

Please consider these issues and respond as soon as possible to:

The Director
Vocational Training Council
PO Box 11 361
Wellington

# THE AIMS OF EDUCATION IN NEW ZEALAND

(Source: A Review of the Core Curriculum for Schools,
Department of Education, March 1984)

EDUCATION IS A LIFELONG PROCESS WHICH AIMS TO HELP PEOPLE TO:

- Develop their ability to communicate and calculate
- Develop their ability to think and solve problems
- Encourage their urge to enquire and to gain personal satisfaction through learning and accomplishment
- Develop an appreciation of the contribution that the arts, sciences and technologies make to people's lives
- Develop a sense of personal identity and self-worth
- Develop their ability to respond to experiences in creative and inventive ways and to develop reliable and workmanlike habits
- Develop an understanding of themselves as New Zealanders, their history, culture, institutions and ways of life
- Develop an understanding of and a sense of responsibility for their own and others' health
- Become self-reliant and to develop a sense of responsibility for personal and group actions
- Develop some understanding of factors influencing the New Zealand economy, of the various roles they can be expected to play, and of the skills and attitudes they will need to participate in it effectively and responsibly
- Develop an understanding of the personal, social and other skills and attitudes they will need to participate in the various communities in New Zealand
- Develop an understanding of people in other countries and cultures, and relationships with them
- Develop an understanding of and responsible attitudes to natural and man-made environments
- Accept the right of individuals and groups to be different
- Encourage the pursuit of excellence through individual and co-operative endeavour in the best interests of the community and nation to which they belong